ployed for sheep grazing—although neighbors' dogs often become a problem. It is also largely cut over for fuel—of dried grass, brush, or wood. Some observers have suggested that much of the wild land could be brought under profitable cultivation by the more extensive use of machinery, fertilizers, and seed selection. Certainly in many sections the customary practice is more than wasteful. Cutting off the wood, brush, and grass from the hills, even to digging up the roots (as is often done under the pressure for fuel), hastens erosion. Any humus and most of the tillable top soil are washed away, and the land impoverished. Often much of the remaining sand and gravel is carried to the plains by heavy rains and there impedes cultivation.

Even in the fertile plots some of the space, possibly five per cent, or more on the average, is taken up by paths and the ever-present graves.

In spite of its dense rural population, therefore, China proper has by no means extended its farm land to the ultimate possible limits. In Manchuria, too, many thousand acres remain relatively unoccupied, and, in spite of its scanty rainfall. Inner Mongolia still contains probably other thousands of acres which wise tillage and selection of crops and seeds could render productive.

Agricultural experts from the Occident have more than once remarked on the skill of the Chinese farmer in taking advantage of the materials at his hand. Even to the amateur observer the application of practical agricultural lore is apparent. The most obvious testimony to it is the huge population which China has been made to support, a considerable minority of it in comparative comfort. In this, to be sure, the Chinese have been favored by soil and climate, but natural advantages alone

would not account for their success. In utilizing their environment they have accumulated much experience and have displayed no small degree of intelligence. Some of their knowledge has been arrived at empirically and some has doubtless been stumbled upon accidentally. Probably most of the Chinese farmers are simply following with little if any understanding methods inherited from the past. In this, however, they are not unlike the peoples of other lands. Moreover, superstition rather than intelligence often dictates procedures—as also in many other sections of the earth. Modern scientific research in agriculture has much to contribute